

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02
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R 222340Z JUL 77
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4596
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 USUN 2349

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, XF
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER BEGIN'S PRESS CONFERENCE, JULY
22, 1977

1. PRIME MINISTER BEGIN MET WITH PRESS AT UN BUILDING
FOLLOWING HIS JULY 22 NOON APPOINTMENT WITH SECRETARY
GENERAL WALDHEIM. OFFICE OF PRESS INFORMATION SUMMARY
OF BEGIN'S REMARKS FOLLOWS:

2. QUOTE PRIME MINISTER EMNACHES BEGIN HELD A PRESS CON-
FERENCE IN FRONT OF THE CHAGALL WINDOW DIRECTLY AFTER
MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY-GENERAL.

IN AN OPENING STATEMENT, HE SAID HE HAD HAD "A VERY SERIOUS
TALK WITH THE SECRETARY-GENERAL".

HE SAID THE FIRST TOPIC HE, MR. BEGIN, HAD RAISED
WITH THE SECRETARY-GENERAL HAD BEEN THE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN
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LEBANON AND HE HAD BROUGHT A MAP SHOWING THE SITUATION
AROUND THE LITANI RIVER AND ISRAEL'S NORTHERN BORDER
TO SHOW THE SECRETARY GENERAL. HE THEN DISPLAYED THE
MAP TO CORRESPONDENTS.

HE SAID THE CHRISTIAN VILLAGES COULD BE SEEN TO BE AN ISLAND
SURROUNDED BY AN OCEAN OF MOSLEMS. THE SO-CALLED PLO SHOWERED

CANNONS AND ARTILLERY ON THE 50,000 CHRISTIANS DAILY.
IF IT HAD NOT BEEN FOR ISRAEL'S HELP THE CHRISTIANS WOULD HAVE
BEEN WIPED OUT. NOBODY ELSE WAS HELPING THEM.

HE AID HE HAD TOLD THE SECRETARY-GENERAL THAT ISRAEL EXPECTED
THE CHRISTIAN WORLD TO DEFEND THIS OUTNUMBERED CHRISTIAN MI-
NORITY. "WE WILL GO ON DEFENDING THIS MINORITY",
HE SAID, BECAUSE THE ISRAELIS KNEW WHAT IT WAS TO BE
A MINORITY. HE SAID HE APPEALED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL,
TO UNITED STATES PUBLIC OPINION AND TO WORLD PUBLIC OPINION
TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT ASSISTING THE 50,000 MEN, WOMEN AND
CHILDREN WHO WERE SURROUNDED BY 250,000 MOSLEMS WHO
SOUGHT TO DESTROY THEM.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE SECOND TOPIC HE HAD DISCUSSED
WITH THE SECRETARY-GENERAL WAS ABOUT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE.
HE SAID THE SECRETARY-GENERAL HAD RAISED THE QUESTION
OF PARTICIPATION. MR. BEGIN SAID HE HAD TOLD THE SECRETARY-
GENERAL THAT THE NINE COUNTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY SHOULD BE
VERY CAREFUL IN TAKING STANDS. HE HAD TOLD THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
THAT THE RHINE AND DANUBE WERE FULL OF JEWISH BLOOD. HE
HAD TOLD THE SECRETARY-GENERAL THAT THE SO-CALLED
PRINCIPLE OF A PALESTINIAN STATE WOULD "MEAN SHEDDING OF
JEWISH BLOOD."

RM BEGIN SAID THERE WAS COMPLETE HISTORICAL DISTORTION OF THE
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TERM PALESTINIANS. "WE ARE A GROUP OF PALESTINIANS", HE
DECLARED. HE SAID "THERE ARE PALESTINIAN JEWS AND PALESTINIAN
ARABS". HE HAD TOLD THE SECRETARY-GENERAL THAT IT WAS
IMPOSSIBLE TO USE THE TERM "PALESTINIANS"
AGAINST THE RIGHTS OF ISRAELIS.

MR BEGIN SAID THE THIRD QUESTION HE HAD RAISED WITH THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL WAS THE PLIGHT OF A SMALL GROUP OF JEWS
IN SYRIA, NUMBERING 500 FAMILIES, AND LIVING IN A GHETTO
AND IN FEAR. THEY WANTED TO GET OUT. HE FOUND IT ES-
TONISHING THAT PRESIDENT ASSAD STILL KEP THEM AS HOSTAGES.
HE HAD ASKED THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO BRING THIS MATTER TO THE
ATTENTION OF SYRIA AND TO AKS PRESIDENT ASSAD TO LET THE
FEW REMAINING JEWS LEAVE SYRIA. HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL WOULD INTERCEDE WITH DAMASCUS ON THIS HUMANI-
TARIAN PROBLEM.

HE ADDED THAT ISRAEL HAD RECENTLY HELPED HOMELESS VIET-
NAMESE BECAUSE JEWS REMEMBERED WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO BE ADRIFT
ON BOATS AND HOMELESS. HE SAID IF ISRAEL HELPED THE
HOMELESS VIETNAMESE HOW COULD IT ACQUIESCE TO THE PERSECUTION
OF ITS OWN BERTHREN.

MR. BEGIN THEN ANSWERED QUESTION.

HE WAS ASKED WHAT WERE HIS VIEWS REGARDING A UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING FORCE IN LEBANON. MR BEGIN SAID THE SECRETARY GENERAL HAD ASKED THIS QUESTION. HE HAD REPLIED IN THE SAME WAY AS HE HAD PREVIOUSLY REPLIED TO PRESIDENT CARTER ON THIS QUESTION.

MR BEGIN WAS ASKED IF HE HAD SUGGESTED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ANY UNITED NATIONS INITIATIVES REGARDING THE MIDDLE EAST. MR BEGIN SAID HE HAD NOT ASKED FOR ANY UNITED NATIONS INITIATIVES. IT WAS THE PRESENT MAJORITY IN THE UNITED NATIONS WHICH HAD ADOPTED THE ABOMINABLE RESOLUTION EQUATING ZIONISM WITH UNCLASSIFIED

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RACISM. HE HAD PROTESTED VERY SERIOUSLY TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ABOUT THAT RESOLUTION. HE HAD NOT ASKED THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO TAKE ANY INITIATIVES BECAUSE HE KNEW HIS DIFFICULTIES WITH THE MAJORITY IN THE UNITED NATIONS. ISRAEL ITSELF HAD TAKEN THE INITIATIVE--THE DRAWING UP OF PEACE TREATIES WITH ITS ARAB NEIGHBORS.

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SS-15 USIA-15 AF-10 ARA-14 EA-09 EUR-12 ACDA-10
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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
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A CORRESPONDENT ASKED IF GENEVA WAS A FAIR FORUM WHEN THE SOVIET UNION HAD NO DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. MR BEGIN SAID THAT WAS A GOOD QUESTION FOR MR GROMYKO.

HE ADDED THAT ISRAEL WANTED THE GENEVA CONFERENCE RECONVENED AND HAD ASKED THE CO-CHAIRMEN TO SEND A LETTER RECONVENING THE CONFERENCE. HE SAID ISRAEL WAS INTERESTED IN NORMALIZING RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION BUT IT WAS UP TO THE SOVIET UNION TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE SINCE IT WAS THAT COUNTRY THAT HAD BROKEN OFF RELATIONS. IF THE SOVIET UNION DID MAKE AN INITIATIVE HE SAID HE WOULD ASK THE SOVIET UNION "TO RELEASE THE PRISONERS OF ZION LANGUISHING IN CONCENTRATION CAMPS AND LET EVERY JEW IN THE SOVIET UNION WHO WANTS TO GO TO LEAVE FOR THEIR HISTORIC HOMELAND".

ASKED ABOUT DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH SPAIN, MR. BEGIN SAID ISRAEL HOPED TO HAVE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH DEMOCRATIC SPAIN. BUT ANY AMBASSADOR MUST BE SENT TO JERUSALEM. UNCLASSIFIED

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A CORRESPONDENT SAID MR TERZI OF THE PLO HAD SAID HIS PLAN FOR THE WEST BANK WAS THAT OF CREATING A BANTUSTAN. COULD PALESTINIANS IN GAZA AND THE WEST BANK HAVE ISRAELI CITIZENSHIP? COULD ALL THE PALESTINIANS WANTING TO RETURN TO PALESTINE ALSO HAVE ISRAELI CITIZENSHIP?

MR BEGIN SAID "THE WEST BANK IS JUDEA AND SAMARIA." HE SAID TRANS-JORDAN HAD OCCUPIED THE AREA THROUGH AGGRESSION. ONLY THE UNITED KINGDOM AND PAKISTAN RECOGNIZED THE AREA AS PART OF JORDAN.

MR BEGIN SAID THERE WERE 450,000 ARAB REFUGEES IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA AND THE GAZA STRIP. NEITHER JORDAN NOR EGYPT HAD DONE ANYTHING FOR THEM IN 19 YEARS. ISRAEL IN THE LAST 10 YEARS HAD GIVEN THEM HOUSING AND PERMANENT JOBS. "WE ARE GOING TO SOLVE HUMANELY THE PROBLEM OF ARAB REFUGEES", HE SAID. AS FORMER REFUGEES THEMSELVES THE ISRAELIS UNDERSTOOD WHAT IT WAS TO BE A REFUGEE.

AT THE SAME TIME, HE SAID THE ARABS SHOULD SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF REFUGEES IN THEIR LANDS. THERE WERE 21 ARAB STATES AND THERE WERE LOTS OF PETRO-DOLLARS. THE ARABS COULD HAVE SOLVED THEIR REFUGEE PROBLEM LONG AGO.

HE SAID CZECHOSLOVAKIA HAD NEVER BEEN ASKED TO TAKE BACK GERMAN REFUGEES. NOBODY HAD ASKED INDIA

AND PAKISTAN TO RESETTLE REFUGEES.

HE SAID IN 1947 THE ARAB STATES HAD ATTACKED IN AN ATTEMPT
TO DESTROY ISRAEL. HIS COUNTRY HAD CALLED ON THOSE
ARABS IN ISRAEL TO STAY BUT THE ARAB LEADERS HAD CALLED ON THEM TO
FLEE AND THEN "TO COME BACK VICTORIOUS TO TEL AVIV."
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MR BEGIN SAID: "THEY DID NOT COME VICTORIOUS TO TEL AVIV AND
THE NEVER WILL." HE SAID "THE PROBLEM OF THE REFUGEES IS THE
ORIGINAL ARAB AGGRESSION". HE SAID "THE ARABS SHOULD
SOLVE THEIR REFUGEE PROBLEM; WE WILL SOLVE OURS."
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